

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 27, 2006

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Fish and Wildlife Service conducts five-year status  
reviews of 37 Southeastern species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to conduct a five-year status review of two endangered birds, the Everglade snail kite and the wood stork, as well as 35 other threatened and endangered species occurring in Florida, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina.

These five-year reviews are conducted to ensure that listing classifications under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) are accurate. Any interested party is invited to provide information and comments pertaining to these species. Written comments and information related to these five-year reviews must be received on or before November 27, 2006.

This notice covers the following species federally listed as endangered: Anastasia Island beach mouse, Choctawhatchee beach mouse, Perdido Key beach mouse, Lower Keys marsh rabbit, Everglade snail kite (bird), wood stork, Culebra giant anole (reptile), Gulf moccasinshell (mussel), Ochlockonee moccasinshell (mussel), oval pigtoe (mussel), shinyrayed pocketbook (mussel), fat three-ridge (mussel), Crenulate lead-plant, Catesbaea melanocarpa (plant), Etonia rosemary (plant), Cordia alliodora (plant), Avon Park harebells (plant), beautiful goetzea (plant), Lepanthes eltoroensis (plant), Mitracarpus maxwelliae (plant), Mitracarpus polycladus (plant), Peperomia wheeleri (plant), wide-leaf warea (plant), elfin tree fern, Elaphoglossum serpens (plant), Polystichum calderonense (plant), Tectaria estremerana (plant), Thelypteris inabonensis (plant), Thelypteris verecunda (plant), Thelypteris yaucoensis (plant), and Florida perforate cladonia (plant).

This notice also announces the Service's active review of the following species that are currently federally listed as threatened: bluetail mole skink (reptile), sand skink (reptile), golden coqui (amphibian), purple bankclimber (mussel), Chipola slabshell (mussel), and Garber's spurge (plant).

Specifically, this review seeks information on: (1) species biology, including population trends, distribution, abundance, demographics, and genetics; (2) habitat conditions, including amount, distribution, and suitability; (3) conservation measures that have been implemented; (4) threat status and trends; and (5) other new information, data, or corrections, including taxonomic or nomenclatural changes; identification of erroneous information contained in the ESA list, and improved analytical methods. Comments and materials received will be available for public inspection by appointment.

In addition to reviewing the classification of these species, a five-year review presents an opportunity to track the species' recovery progress. It may benefit species by providing valuable information to

guide future conservation efforts. Information gathered during a review can assist in making funding decisions, conducting interagency consultations, making permitting decisions, and determining whether to update recovery plans, and other actions under the ESA.

The Federal Register notice announcing the status review of these 37 federally listed species is available on-line at <http://frwebgate2.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=46836548135+6+0+0&WAISaction=retrieve>

Written comments and information on the Anastasia Island beach mouse, wood stork, Etonia rosemary, and wide-leaf warea may be e-mailed to Sandy\_MacPherson@fws.gov, faxed to 904-232-2404, or sent via regular mail to Sandy MacPherson, Jacksonville Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 6620 Southpoint Drive South, Suite 310, Jacksonville, Florida, 32216.

Written comments and information on the Lower Keys marsh rabbit, Everglade snail kite, bluetail mole skink, sand skink, Crenulate lead-plant, Garber's spurge, Avon Park harebells, and Florida perforate cladonia may be e-mailed to Cindy\_Schulz@fws.gov, faxed to 772-562-4288, or sent via regular mail to Cindy Schulz, South Florida Ecological Services Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, Florida, 32960.

Written comments and information on the Choctawhatchee beach mouse, Perdido Key beach mouse, purple bankclimber, Gulf moccasinshell, Ochlockonee moccasinshell, oval pigtoe, shinyrayed pocketbook, Chipola slabshell, and fat three-ridge may be e-mailed to Gail\_Carmody@fws.gov, faxed to 850-763-2177, or sent via regular mail to Gail Carmody, Panama City Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1601 Balboa Avenue, Panama City, Florida, 32405.

Written comments and information on the Culebra giant anole, golden coqui, Catesbaea melanocarpa, Cordia bellonis, beautiful goetzea, Lepanthes eltoroensis, Mitracarpus maxwelliae, Mitracarpus polycladus, Peperomia wheeleri, elfin tree fern, Elaphoglossum serpens, Polystichum calderonense, Tectaria estremerana, Thelypteris inabonensis, Thelypteris verecunda and Thelypteris yaucoensis may be e-mailed to Edwin\_Muniz@fws.gov, faxed to (787) 851-7440, or sent via regular mail to Edwin Muniz, Caribbean Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 491, Boquerón, Puerto Rico 00622.

Information received in response to this notice of review will be available for public inspection by appointment, during normal business hours, at the same addresses.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices, and 81

ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.